



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/766,684	01/28/2004	Nabil L. Muhanna	126013-1003	2069

7590 11/19/2007  
STEVEN E. ROSS, IP SECTION  
KENNETH T. EMANUELSON  
GARDERE WYNNE SEWELL LLP  
1601 ELM STREET, SUITE 3000  
DALLAS, TX 75201

EXAMINER
----------

SNOW, BRUCE EDWARD

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3738

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
-----------	---------------

11/19/2007

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/766,684

Applicant(s)

MUHANNA ET AL.

Examiner

Bruce E. Snow

Art Unit

3738

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 September 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 19-42 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 33 and 37-41 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 19- 32, 34-36, 42 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                       | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                       |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Response to Amendment***

The declaration filed on 9/07/07 under 37 CFR 1.131 has been considered but is ineffective to overcome the Zubok et al and Shelokov references. The evidence submitted is insufficient to establish a conception of the invention prior to the effective date of said references. While conception is the mental part of the inventive act, it must be capable of proof, such as by demonstrative evidence or by a complete disclosure to another. Conception is more than a vague idea of how to solve a problem. The requisite means themselves and their interaction must also be comprehended. See *Mergenthaler v. Scudder*, 1897 C.D. 724, 81 O.G. 1417 (D.C. Cir. 1897). The exhibits A-I fail to show/teach a concave-convex articulating surface as claimed. Applicant's declaration fails to describe what is shown in said exhibits.

The evidence submitted is insufficient to establish a reduction to practice of the invention in this country or a NAFTA or WTO member country prior to the effective date of the Zubok et al and Shelokov references. The exhibits A-I fail to show/teach a concave-convex articulating surface as claimed. Applicant's declaration fails to describe what is shown in said exhibits.

The evidence submitted is insufficient to establish diligence from a date prior to the date of reduction to practice of the said references to either a constructive reduction to practice or an actual reduction to practice.

Further, the declaration is ineffective because it was not signed by all the inventors.

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments filed 9/07/07 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Regarding the Shelokov reference, Figure 1b at least shows concave-convex in a single plane. Further, figure 1a, shows a side view which is clearly at least convex and figure 1b, showing the rear view, which is at least a concave. See all figures.

### ***Election/Restrictions***

Newly submitted claims 37-41 are directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons: The method of providing a prosthetic disc was not previously submitted nor considered. Claims 37-41 and the remaining claims are related as product and process of use. The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or (2) the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product. See MPEP § 806.05(h). In the instant case the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using wherein the product is used as a teaching device or used in a testing method.

Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and there would be a serious burden on the examiner if restriction is not required because the inventions have acquired a separate status in the art due to their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claims 37-41 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

Additionally, claim 33 is directed to a non-elected species.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 20, 23, 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Claim 20, "hyperparabolic" is new matter.

Claim 23, "substantially planar" is new matter.

Claim 25, "additional features for bone ingrowth" is new matter.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

Art Unit: 3738

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 20-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 20-30 depend from cancelled claim 1; their scope is indefinite and no art rejections could be applied.

Claim 20, "hyperparabolic" is not understood.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting

Art Unit: 3738

directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000.

Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 19, 31, 32, 34-36, 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Zubok et al (2004/0176850).

Zubok et al teaches a prosthetic disc comprising:  
a first and second disc bodies 200, 300 having complimentary saddle shaped articulating surfaces each surface being one of concave and convex in a first plane and the other of concave and convex in a perpendicular plane to first. The surfaces can be described as being parabolic, hyperbolic, or follows a radius.

The reference clearly teaches a disc body, having a first surface which is concave-convex and a second body which has a reciprocally concave-convex articulating surface.

Claims 19, 31, 32, 34-36, 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Shelokov (6,039,763).

Shelokov teaches a prosthetic disc comprising:  
a first and second disc bodies 1, 10 having complimentary saddle shaped articulating surfaces each surface being one of concave and convex in a first plane and the other of concave and convex in a perpendicular plane to first. The surfaces can be described as being parabolic, hyperbolic, or follows a radius.

The reference clearly teaches a disc body, having a first surface which is concave-convex and a second body which has a reciprocally concave-convex articulating surface.

Claims 19, 31, 32, 34-36, 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ferree et al (2005/0267582).

Ferree teaches a prosthetic disc comprising:  
a first and second disc bodies having complimentary saddle shaped articulating surfaces each surface being one of concave and convex in a first plane and the other of concave and convex in a perpendicular plane to first. The surfaces can be described as being parabolic, hyperbolic, or follows a radius.

The reference clearly teaches a disc body, having a first surface which is concave-convex and a second body which has a reciprocally concave-convex articulating surface.

### ***Conclusion***

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not



Art Unit: 3738

mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action. .

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bruce E. Snow whose telephone number is (571) 272-4759. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott can be reached on (571) 272-4754. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

bes



**BRUCE SNOW**  
PRIMARY EXAMINER